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EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS TAGS: NATO GR

SUBJECT: GREEK-NATO NEGOTIATIONS

DURING DISCUSSION WITH AMBASSADOR ON APRIL 30 ON A NUMBER OF SUBJECTS, MFA DIRECTOR GEN FOR POL AFFAIRS TZOUNIS INDICATED THAT PM CARAMANLIS HAD NOT YET MADE ANY DECISION CONCERNING THE TIMING OF THE BEGINNING OF NEGOTIATIONS WITH NATO. HE SAID THAT A SERIES OF IM-PORTANT INTERNAL PROBLEMS CONFRONTED THE PRIME MINISTER AT PRESENT -- SUCH AS THE CONSTITUTION AND WHETHER HE WOULD SEEK THE PRESIDENCY OR REMAIN PRIME MINISTER --WHICH MEANT THE PM WOULD WANT TO TAKE SOME ADDITIONAL TIME BEFORE DECIDING ON THIS QUESTION. TZOUNIS ADDED THAT THE FACT A SMALL NUMBER OF TROUBLEMAKERS COULD MOBILIZE MASSIVE DEMONSTRATIONS, AS THEY HAD LAST APRIL 21 WHEN THE EMBASSY WAS ATTACKED, SHOWS HOW VOLATILE PUBLIC OPINION REMAINS IN GREECE AND THIS IS ANOTHER REASON WHY THE PRIME MINISTER WANTS TO MOVE CAUTIOUSLY ON THE NATO QUESTION. **KUBISCH**

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